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Working Effectively in Post-Conflict and Humanitarian Situations

Monterey, California. Naval Postgraduate School

Working Effectively in Post-Conflict & Humanitarian Situations

tools for communication, collaboration, and negotiation

October 15-19, 2006
Naval Postgraduate School
Monterey, California

An event sponsored by:

The United States Institute of Peace and the
Center for Stabilization and Reconstruction Studies

The Center for Stabilization and Reconstruction Studies

The Center for Stabilization and Reconstruction Studies (CSRS) is a teaching institute which develops and hosts educational programs for stabilization and reconstruction practitioners operating around the globe. Established by the Naval Postgraduate School in 2004 through the vision and congressional support of Congressman Sam Farr, CSRS creates a wide array of programs to foster dialogue among practitioners, as well as help them develop new strategies and refine best practices to improve the effectiveness of their important global work.

Located at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, CSRS also contributes to the university's research and graduate degree programs. For more information about CSRS, its philosophy, and programs, please visit www.nps.edu/csrs.

About This Event

Working Effectively in Post-Conflict and Humanitarian Situations: Tools for Communication, Collaboration, and Negotiation was held October 15-19, 2006, at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. Representatives from nongovernmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, government civilian agencies, and the US armed forces gathered to discuss negotiation principles, practice new skills, and learn best practices from experts. The event was hosted by CSRS and was cosponsored by the United States Institute of Peace, drawing from their successful curriculum on negotiation issues.

The United States Institute of Peace

The United States Institute of Peace is an independent, non-partisan, national institution established and funded by Congress. Its goals are to help prevent and resolve violent international conflicts, promote post-conflict stability and democratic transformations, and increase peacebuilding capacity, tools, and intellectual capital worldwide. The Institute does this by empowering others with knowledge, skills, and resources, as well as by its direct involvement in peacebuilding efforts around the globe. For more information, please visit www.usip.org.

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Executive Summary

Speakers:

Ambassador John E. Herbst
Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization
US State Department

Congressman Sam Farr
(CA-17)

Nina Sughrue
Senior Program Officer
United States Institute of Peace

Matthew Vaccaro
Program Director
Center for Stabilization and Reconstruction Studies

As post-conflict and humanitarian needs grow globally, the military is playing a larger role in relief and reconstruction work. This new dynamic, coupled with the fluid nature of crises, is causing relief actors to rethink how they function and interact in the field. While the military and humanitarian communities necessarily have different missions, cooperation and information sharing can improve the effectiveness and security of all actors. The Center for Stabilization and Reconstruction Studies has hosted a number of events on these critical topics, analyzing the roles these communities play in crises and helping participants create new strategies for working together or sharing the same space.

As relief practitioners seek to bridge cultural divides and resolve issues in the field, negotiation expertise can be critical. Skilled negotiators can illuminate parties' needs, delineate common ground, and help groups achieve successful outcomes. Sometimes individuals negotiate with other relief actors, seeking to clarify roles and responsibilities. Other times they negotiate with a wide array of players, including host governments, activists, and rebel factions, seeking to avert or minimize crises and prevent states from failing. Often such negotiations or mediations are informal and ad hoc, resulting from the various actors' efforts to conduct relief or other activities in local communities. Changing political dynamics, security concerns, health issues, and refugee concerns can add complexity and urgency to multiparty negotiations, requiring that third parties use skill, sensitivity, and flexibility to resolve escalating disputes.

To help relief practitioners improve their negotiation expertise, the Center for Stabilization and Reconstruction Studies (CSRS) teamed with the United States Institute for Peace (USIP) Professional Training Program to provide hands-on skills training. *Working Effectively in Post-Conflict and Humanitarian Situations: Tools for Communication, Collaboration, and Negotiation*, held October 15-19, 2006, at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, brought together junior and mid-level representatives from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental

Image above: Participants attend the opening ceremony with speeches by Ambassador John E. Herbst and Congressman Sam Farr.

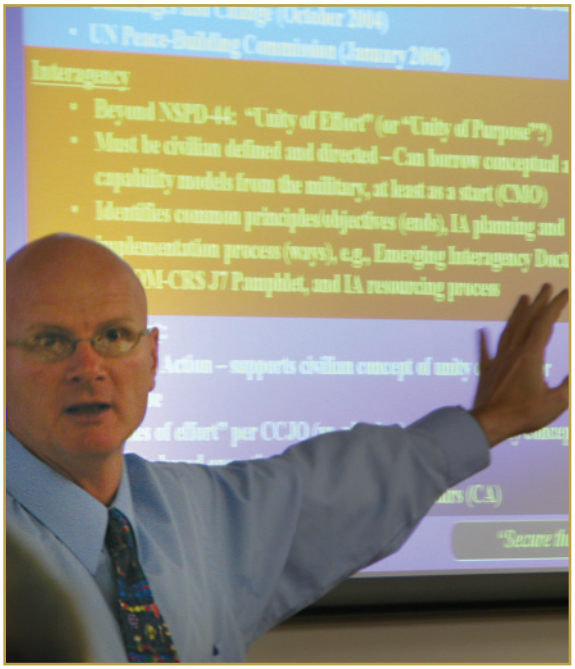


Image at right: Colonel Christopher Holshek presents his views on the US Army Civil Affairs' mission.

organizations (IGOs), government civilian agencies, and the US armed forces to discuss the civilian-military relationship and hone negotiation skills using self-assessment and role play in a series of increasingly complex scenarios. This program leveraged USIP's proven curriculum for preparing practitioners for the complex negotiation situations that can arise during large-scale overseas emergencies.

Working Effectively opened with remarks from two industry luminaries: Ambassador John E. Herbst and Congressman Sam Farr. A career member of the Senior Foreign Service, Ambassador Herbst held diplomatic posts in Israel, Russia, and Saudi Arabia, before serving as an ambassador to both Uzbekistan and the Ukraine. Now serving as the US State Department's Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS), Ambassador Herbst discussed the challenges of coordinating interagency efforts for stabilization and reconstruction. As a new "startup" in the US Government, S/CRS is forging new relationships and seeking to overcome bureaucratic resistance to change. Additionally, S/CRS is pioneering a civilian response corps to provide targeted expertise for stabilization and reconstruction efforts around the world. Although this effort has been small-scale thus far, Ambassador Herbst hopes to build a corps that is some 200 professionals strong in the next few years. Members of the corps would be able to staff a wide array of critical positions, ranging from advisors to government ministries, to engineers, to health workers, all with the capability to deploy on 48 hours of notice.

Participants were very interested in the concept of a new civilian response corps and asked a number of questions about how it would interact with the military, what positions it would staff, its prospects for funding, and countries of engagement. Ambassador Herbst acknowledged that deployments are not yet systematic and expressed hopes that adequate program funding and broader acceptance of the concept would increase the use of this important, innovative instrument of the US Government.

"The problem of failed states — the need to stabilize and reconstruct them – is one of the primary challenges of our time."
— Ambassador John E. Herbst

After the question and answer session, Congressman Sam Farr (CA-17) welcomed participants to the event, saying that they were at the "cutting-edge of world diplomacy." As a member of the House Appropriations Committee and a participant on a blue-ribbon panel on the problem of failed states, Congressman Farr was instrumental in creating CSRS. Said Congressman Farr:

> *We have the talent as a country to fix things that are broken in the world. But we have problems, either cross-culturally or across organizations. We don't talk to each other. And on the ground it all plays out.*

Congressman Farr said that courses such as this one were critical to creating the next generation of leaders. "We are building something here that is new," said Farr, exhorting participants to use newly acquired skills to serve as change agents in their organizations and in the field.

We at CSRS are extremely grateful to Congressman Sam Farr for his leadership in founding our organization and for his continuing support of our work. Through our short courses, we help practitioners develop the critical insights, skills, and relationships they need to increase their effectiveness in the field. From the Congo to Sri Lanka to Afghanistan to the Sudan, these practitioners are working on the front lines of crisis, helping to mitigate human suffering, end conflict, and rebuild infrastructures and societies. To echo Ambassador Herbst, the problem of failed states is one of the foremost challenges of our time; rebuilding these states and helping to heal their societies is an imperative we gladly share with all of you.

Exploring Cultural Differences in Conflict Situations

"With civilians moving in simultaneously with combat troops, we are now in entirely a new dimension for stabilization and reconstruction work. It brings tension to our cultural differences." — Former Ambassador David Lyon (Ret.)

Presenters:

David Lyon
Former Ambassador to Fiji (Ret.)
US State Department

Colonel Christopher Holshek
US Army Civil Affairs (Reserve)

Kaitlin Shilling
Former Project Director, DAI;
Ph.D. candidate, Stanford University

How do organizations differ in their approach to stabilization and reconstruction work? And what are some of the challenges that individuals face in the field? Three practitioners, with experience in the US Government, US military, and a nongovernmental organization (NGO) led a panel discussion to give participants a primer on organizational culture, as well as share their personal experiences and perspectives.

Viewpoint: The US Government

Opening the discussion, David Lyon, a former US ambassador to Fiji, talked about the tension between relief actors, all of whom are focused on their unique missions. While each group wants its mission to succeed, different backgrounds, processes, personalities, even vocabularies, hinder cooperation between the groups. With government civilians deploying simultaneously with combat troops, these tensions have been greatly magnified.

Lyon outlined the State Department's structure and employee mix. While the US State Department has a good record for responding to natural disasters, it has a more checkered record with political crises. One key reason: The US State Department's six regional bureaus wield tremendous power and can limit the influence of the functional bureaus that might have specific expertise relevant to the problem at hand. However, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has sought to ease this problem in part by creating the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization now headed by Ambassador Herbst.

Lyon discussed other key players in development, including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which has undergone a controversial realignment to focus on security, and embassies worldwide. Lyon outlined the different roles and responsibilities of embassy staff and explained how their professional status can affect their behaviors and priorities. Ambassadors must navigate these alliances and motivate staff to be successful.

Lyon offered tips for NGOs working in the field. Call on your local ambassador, he urged; this will likely win you an audience

"It is cheaper to help keep a state from failing than to stabilize it and reconstruct it after it has failed. We need to help create the conditions that will keep that region stable."
—Colonel Christopher Holshek

with the deputy chief of mission. Meet with the local USAID director to learn about the contract bid cycle and priorities. And lastly, attend diplomatic functions. These events are target-rich environments where you will meet ambassadors and other senior leaders working in your field.

Viewpoint: The US Army Civil Affairs

Following David Lyon's presentation, Colonel Christopher Holshek spoke on the changing mandate of the US Army, which is increasingly involved in stabilization and reconstruction activities around the world. According to Holshek, 90% of all nontraditional threats to security now arise from the civil sector, not the armed forces. The global rise of religious conflict, terrorism, drug trafficking, and other ills are creating significant threats to national security. However, America can no longer afford to settle conflicts with superior materiel and logistics. Recovering from the impact of 9/11 alone cost the country a trillion dollars, and terrorism continues to be a significant drain on resources. As our leaders and the armed forces grapple with resource issues, we are beginning to rely on "soft power" or international leverage. Our national security strategy recognizes the need for civil power, but that is not yet reflected in our annual budget, said Holshek.

The military's historic model for operations, unified action, doesn't necessarily apply to today's global crises. With multiple players operating in the field, reconstruction can occur simultaneously with military operations. The military can enable nation-building by improving security conditions so that civil groups work more effectively. Ideally, the entire community will move to a model where we can identify and work with states at crisis onset: It is significantly cheaper to help prevent states from collapsing than to rebuild them after they have failed.

Holshek outlined the work of the Civil Affairs Command, noting these specialists comprise less than 0.5% of the US Army and are primarily reservists. Civil Affairs is short-staffed and needs to be professionalized, said Holshek; however, fixes are not slated until 2012. We need to evolve civil-military

Workshop participant Kate Ahern, a Program Officer with the Citizens Development Corps, talks to Ambassador John E. Herbst, S/CRS Coordinator (left), and Nick Tomb, CSRS Program Coordinator (right).

operations into a joint function, building relationships with civilian counterparts, training together, and developing skills as professional nation-builders, said Holshek.

Viewpoint: A Nongovernmental Organization

Presenting a contrasting perspective, Kaitlin Shilling, a former project director for DAI, outlined the types of organizations typically working in the field: nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and contractors. While contractors are profit-focused, NGOs and IGOs are likely to be true humanitarian actors, seeking to ameliorate human suffering. As a consequence, they are usually much more integrated into the local community than are government and military representatives. How NGOs interact with other groups depends upon a number of factors, including the organization's nationality, its bureaucratic structure, leadership, the project, and the local context. Personalities play a major role and often strongly influence outcomes.

NGOs are struggling with the military's evolving role in post-conflict and relief operations. As neutral, impartial organizations, many NGOs take care not to overstep their organizational boundaries and collude with the military. However, some donors are now mandating cooperation, and so NGOs must find a way to dialogue with the military while honoring their mandate of neutrality.

Ms. Shilling mentioned that her presentation was significantly abbreviated because the first two presenters ran overschedule. This discourtesy, she warned, is the type of act that reinforces the cultural divide between organizations. Her remark struck a chord with participants. On a subsequent day, a military officer referenced the incident and said that we need to provide all organizations with the platform and opportunity to speak.

During the question and answer session following Ms. Shilling's presentation, panelists discussed the challenges inherent in field operations. Ms. Shilling said that political promises create expectations that

"When the US military is deployed, it goes into an area to achieve certain political objectives. That is not why humanitarian people go into an area. You can say we're on the same team, but we're not."
— NGO Representative

often aren't realized on the ground. And Colonel Holshek advised against genericizing NGOs, stating that there are vast differences in organization size, scope, and focus.

Demonstrating the truth of his remark, workshop participants represented a wide range of NGOs, from the Toledo International Peace Center, which provides conflict resolution training and mediation services in Iraq and Latin America; to the Campaign for the Innocent Victims of Violence, which lobbies Congress on behalf of Afghan and Iraqi war victims; to Partners for Democratic Change, which focuses on institution-building; to the Kosovan Nansen Dialogue which brings Albanian and Serb factions together to discuss issues and work towards integrating the community. A complete list of event participants is provided at report close.

While Colonel Holshek cited the growing interdependence of all communities, an NGO representative was quick to draw demarcations between the players: "When the US military is deployed, it goes into an area to achieve certain political objectives. That is not why humanitarian people go into an area. You can say we're on the same team, but we're not," she said.

Understanding and Optimizing Conflict and Negotiation Skills

How do people negotiate? And what informs their decisions? According to workshop facilitator Nina Sughrue, individuals have a dominant conflict style that influences their negotiation choices. That style has both strengths and weaknesses, so it's important to understand the ramifications of implementing that conflict style and know when it's appropriate to adopt another approach.

Presenters/ Facilitators:

Nina Sughrue
Senior Program Officer
United States
Institute of Peace

Jonathan Morgenstein
Program Officer
United States
Institute of Peace

How do people negotiate? And what informs their decisions? To understand their personal negotiation styles, workshop facilitator Nina Sughrue had participants complete the Thomas-Killman Conflict Mode Instrument,[1] the world's best-selling tool for conflict resolution. While participants typically possessed attributes of all five conflict styles – competitor, avoider, compromiser, accommodator, and collaborator – they had a dominant style that unconsciously influenced their negotiation choices. Ms. Sughrue asked participants to break into groups and discuss the major attributes of their primary approach to conflict.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Different Conflict Styles

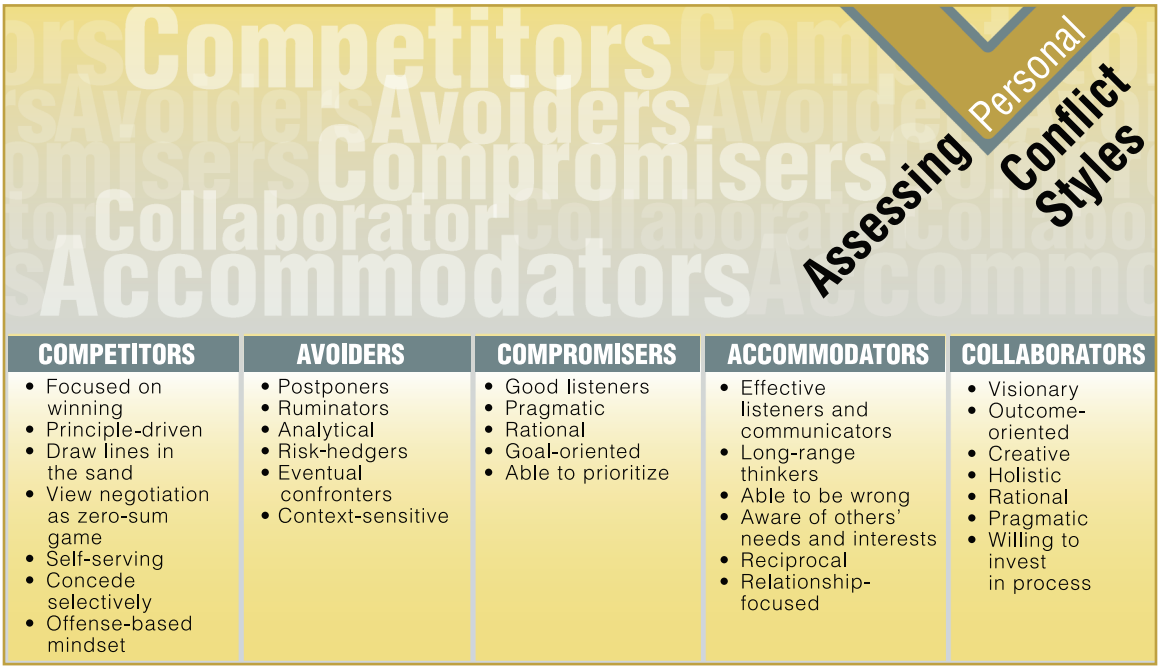
As groups presented their conflict styles, Ms. Sughrue pointed out the positive and negative aspects of each approach. Competing can be effective when your interests are at stake or you are under attack, but it can also antagonize your counterpart, she said. As a consequence, this approach is most suited to one-time negotiations and can be detrimental to building long-term relationships. While being competitive is most effective when you possess power, sometimes having moral authority allows you to prevail in situations where you are essentially powerless. The work of Gandhi and Martin Luther King provides two powerful cases in point.

Avoidance, the opposite of competition, can be an effective strategy to buy time for decision making, but it can also escalate conflict and extend it. People who live in conflict situations are typically avoiders, said Ms. Sughrue, as they seek to limit their exposure to further suffering.

Compromising works well when parties are equally committed and powerful and have a limited amount of time for negotiation; however, it may require making concessions that sacrifice key interests or short-circuit the ability to create a more effective solution through collaboration.

Accommodators give away key interests to build trust, but can lose more than they bargained for if relationships aren't reciprocal or counterparts view them as weak. And finally, collaboration gives parties time to explore options and create win-win solutions,

[1] Thomas, K. W. and R. H. Killman, Thomas-Killman Conflict Mode Survey. Tuxedo, NY: Xicom, 1974.



Participants brainstormed the primary attributes, both positive and negative, of their approach to conflict. After each group presented their conflict style attributes to the group, workshop facilitator Nina Sughrue led a discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of the five different approaches.

but can be inappropriate when time is limited or issues are not significant.

In negotiations, you will often face parties with different conflict styles and run the risk of creating unproductive results. If a competer and an avoider are paired, the negotiation will end quickly or stalemate. Meanwhile, two collaborators may spend excessive time creating an unworkable solution or even generate multiple outcomes.

Answering participant questions, Ms. Sughrue acknowledged that interest-based negotiation was a Western model, but that simply avoiding issues typically worsened them. Thus, its principles could be applied to global issues. Since crises are often very fluid, good negotiators should come to the table fully prepared, be aware of both parties' interests, and stay flexible enough to adapt to changing dynamics.

The Odin Negotiation: Practicing New Principles

To put new insights into practice, the group split into two-person teams, assuming the roles of a local activist and an oil executive in the fictional city of Odin. With its rich oil reserves, Odin has seen an influx of oil companies; however, it will be another decade before local citizens see major financial benefits from their precious natural resources. As a consequence, the Old Town of Odin and its beautiful historic buildings have been neglected, and foreign investors are now buying and renovating buildings for their own use. MegaOil has recently purchased a 500-year-old building, the Palace, and wants to expand it by adding seven new stories to the original three-story structure. The new addition will create office space and apartments for MegaOil employees and wealthy local renters, but clearly violates new regulations that the Old Town Association (OTA) lobbied for and the government recently passed.

Each member of the two-person group was given a fact sheet outlining his or her position, its strengths and weaknesses, and baseline terms for a successful negotiation. One member of each group assumed the role of the OTA Chairman, while the other

Captain Brian M. Swiegart of the US Army and Dr. Laina Reynolds Levy, a Program Manager with Partners for Democratic Change, negotiate the Odin exercise and seek to create win-win results for their fictional organizations.

acted as the MegaOil Odin Operations Director. The OTA Chairman's objectives were to obtain guarantees that MegaOil would preserve the architectural integrity of the building, minimize the number of new stories built, and provide reduced-rate housing for local citizens. Meanwhile, the MegaOil executive's goals were to build the tallest structure possible to maximize the profitability of the project.

Understanding Positions, Creating Win-Win Outcomes

Participants spent a little over an hour conducting the exercise. After returning to the larger group, participants discussed their strategies. One MegaOil representative used a "carrot and stick" approach – first threatening to leave the country, then extending an offer to the OTA to collaborate with architects on designing the new plan. In another group, the OTA Chairman conceded a taller structure in exchange for a greater number of reduced-rate apartments. Most were able to articulate their positions – profit for MegaOil and historical preservation for OTA – and then work to create an effective compromise. As Ms. Sughrue pointed out, the parties' objectives were not incompatible and multiple outcomes were possible.

Moving Past Positions to Interests

While people's positions are often easily uncovered during a negotiation, their interests may be more difficult to deduce. Sometimes individuals are not even aware of what their own interests are if there is a strong emotional context to the issue at hand. Says Ms. Sughrue: "Positions are what negotiators say they want; interests are what they need." Consequently, understanding parties' interests is absolutely critical to executing a successful negotiation. Negotiators who focus on positions alone risk creating deadlock, while those who can uncover their counterparts' interests may avoid or circumvent roadblocks by demonstrating shared or compatible goals.

Understanding Your BATNA

Before beginning a negotiation, each party needs to understand its BATNA[2] – the best alternative to a non-negotiated agreement.

[2] Fisher, Roger, William L. Ury and Bruce Patton. "Original Explanation of BATNA." In *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, Second Edition, 101-111. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., April 1992.

"Understanding your BATNA – your best alternative to a non-negotiated agreement – gives you flexibility and power. It will help you achieve your goals."

—Workshop Facilitator Nina Sughrue

What will each side do if no agreement is reached? What are the implications of walking away? It's critical to have a backup strategy, says Ms. Sughrue. Understanding your BATNA gives you flexibility and power, while keeping you on target through the course of the negotiation.

Best Practices for Negotiating Successfully

What are some best practices for negotiation? Determine your own interests first, but don't assume you understand the other party's needs. Let the other person talk first if you need to gain clarity. And avoid narrowing the negotiation to one issue. The more issues you have on the table, the greater opportunity you will have to build trust and rapport. If you are facing off against a bully, avoid the temptation to meet force with force. Try to present your ideas in an attractive way and use your understanding of the other party's perspective to shape your negotiation strategy. Otherwise, you risk devolving the negotiation into a fruitless debate, where parties jockey to show their strength.

Participants discussed whether you should always ask for more than you expect to get and are willing to settle for. One participant said that it's important to have some throwaways as concession points, while another said that it's often possible to get what you need just by letting the other party talk. Still another said the issue at hand should govern the approach: If you are bargaining over price, it's important to aim high, but in policy talks, it might be counter-productive. The other party might leave, putting you in a position of weakness if talks restarted. Participants concluded that no simple formula exists that can be applied to each situation successfully.

Cultural Differences with Negotiation

Participants discussed how negotiation styles can vary greatly across countries and organizations. A routine marketplace exchange in India might include demands that would seem preposterous in another culture, but would be encouraged and accepted there. A participant who had worked in France countered with an example of how her organization had overscoped its budget,

"I've heard three times that unless I'm a military commander, I have to do what I'm told. That's not true. I have a mission, and as long as it's not illegal, immoral, or fattening, I can get there any way I want."
— Military Officer

a common practice in the United States, but one that had created credibility problems with the donor organization, which then demanded much stricter accounting. Ms. Sughrue also stated that the various actors in the relief community – the State Department, military, and NGOs – have different cultures which may affect their negotiation styles and impact the overall process. A military officer disagreed with her assertion. "Most military officers get their graduate degrees from civilian institutions. I learned about BATNA at graduate school. Beyond the military focus, I don't think there's any difference at all."

Misperceptions about Military Authority

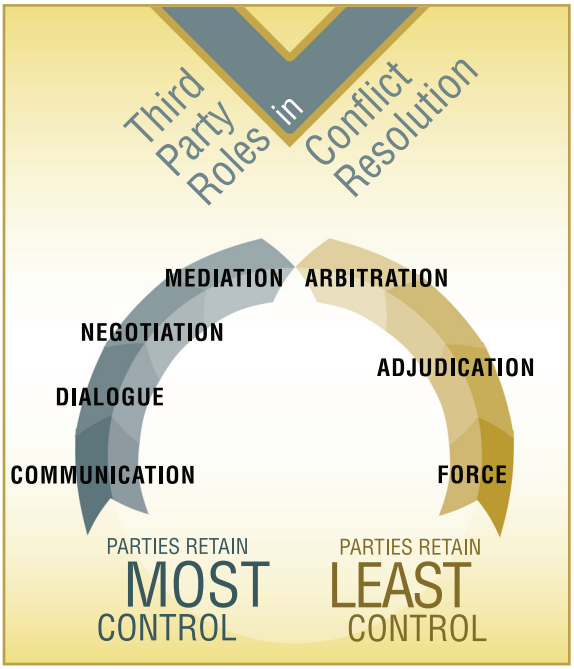
This comment launched a lively discussion on common misperceptions about military authority. Said one officer: "We delegate responsibility to the lowest level, but not authority." As a consequence, one of the military participants advised being upfront with negotiation counterparts about decision-making limits. However, another thought that position too negative and recommended leading with capabilities, rather than limitations. Said yet another exasperated officer: "I've heard three times that unless I'm a military commander, I have to do what I'm told. That's not true. I have a mission, and as long as it's not illegal, immoral, or fattening, I can get there any way I want."

The Impact of Gender

Participants then discussed how gender affects a negotiator's position and leverage. As a young State Department official, Ms. Sughrue said that she found her age to be more of a hindrance than her gender, but has had to work with women of other cultures, including Pakistan, to teach them to be less accommodating and more competitive. An IGO member who works in Pakistan said that most of the lead positions for earthquake relief are held by women, and that they are actually far more effective than men because community leaders listen to them with respect.

The Third Party's Role

In the field, negotiations often aren't linear progressions and can break down or reach



Third parties can play a wide array of roles in negotiations, from merely facilitating meetings to forcibly negotiating peace between warring parties.

a point where further discussion is futile or undesirable. In these instances, it may be helpful to invite a third party to the table. The third party can play an array of roles: from relaying messages to opposing sides, to offering mediation services, to ending disputes forcibly, said United States Institute of Peace presenter Jonathan Morgenstein. (See graphic above.) If two parties aren't speaking, a third entity can provide conciliation, interpreting each side's demands and messages to the other, as Henry Kissinger did with the Arabs and Israelis. When adversarial parties are willing to engage in talks, third parties can act as facilitators, making sure that the conversation stays on course, or assume roles as mediators, helping parties understand their positions and interests and move towards an agreement.

Further along the spectrum, a power mediator will use a combination of incentives and punitive measures to achieve desired results, while an arbiter will resolve issues for warring parties unilaterally. Power mediators include Jimmy Carter, who offered financial incentives to help Israel and Egypt finalize the Camp David accords, and Richard Holbrooke who brought Bosnian, Croatian, and Bosnian Serb leaders to the unlikely locale of Dayton, Ohio, to end the Bosnian war. While third parties intervene in different ways, they help warring parties focus on key issues, work towards crafting a resolution, and begin building new relationships. Eventually, the third party will hand off supervision to another entity to ensure that peace agreements are followed. Sometimes there are multiple third parties involved; in these instances, a lead organization or nation can help maintain unity among all groups and bring order to a chaotic peace process.

Handling Complex Negotiations

If negotiations between two parties are complex, what happens when the number of players increases? That question undergirded the group's next simulation, a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) exercise, led by Nicholas Tomb, CSRS Program Coordinator. For this exercise, participants represented key players at a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) meeting called to discuss the relationship between PRTs and

humanitarian organizations in Afghanistan. Participants were asked to explore the potential for coordination and information sharing among the groups, as well as discuss the security challenges faced by their particular organization.

Ms. Sughrue encouraged participants to prepare for the session by evaluating the key players in the negotiation, their interests, and any resources that could be brought to bear. Even small issues – the venue, seating, schedule, and ground rules – should be determined in advance to avoid creating unnecessary misunderstandings. All parties should be allowed to share their perspectives, and the mediator should work towards creating a solution that solves key problems, addresses interests, and focuses on a long-term outcome.

A PRT Meeting: Creating Constructive Communication

Participants were assigned roles representing key players who would likely be attending such a meeting: the US Army Civil Affairs, NATO, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), NGOs, and the Afghan Ministry of the Interior. On the recommendation of an IGO staffer, workshop facilitators changed the composition of the NGOs, so that instead of being US-based, one was British and the other French. The NATO representative was instructed to chair the meeting and push other participants towards consensus, as well as create specific information-sharing processes.

After working through the simulation, the breakout groups reported on their progress. The first group decided to share information through UNOCHA to avoid compromising NGO independence, hold high-level meetings nationally and out-of-country, and meet monthly at the regional level. While one of the NGOs asked the military to stop distributing relief goods to avoid encroaching on NGO work, this request was denied.

Using UNOCHA as an Information Conduit

Similarly, the second group agreed to use UNOCHA as an intermediary. Participants

Robert Ord, Dean of the Naval Postgraduate School of International Graduate Studies talks with Congressman Sam Farr at the reception after the opening ceremony.

agreed to hold monthly in-person meetings, with one NGO opting to join the meetings via telephone to avoid the perception of colluding with the military. NATO and the US Army would distribute daily updates of unclassified information to group members via an online portal. NGOs would provide input into military planning, but setting strategy would remain the province of the military. One of the NGOs created a memo of understanding with the US Army to delineate responsibilities and operational autonomy, while a side meeting between another NGO and the Afghan minister went sour, resulting in threats and accusations. The NGO representative didn't want to report to the minister and threatened to take his case to the media, while the Afghan minister called his bluff and asked him to leave the country.

Creating Multi-Faceted Approaches to Information Sharing

The third group split information sharing into two categories: relief and security. Relief issues were non-controversial, and NATO and NGOs agreed to share information on operations through the Afghan minister. The minister would host two meetings, one with the NGO community and one with the PRT representatives. The reason why? "He will eventually become the main conduit for information anyway," said a group member.

Security issues proved more difficult. The group agreed that NATO would provide information on structural and security threats as long as it didn't compromise military missions. Meanwhile, NGOs would share security threat and crime data, but not information on demonstrations or protestors, with PRTs.

The Media as Validator

The fourth group also decided to use the Afghan minister as a conduit, but chose to make their choice extremely public, inviting the media to an inaugural meeting to help validate the proceedings. Meetings would be held weekly and attended by the minister, with UNOCHA facilitating discussion until the minister gained legitimacy in the eyes of attendees.

Joked one military officer about his peers who were assigned to play NGO representatives during the negotiation exercise: "I know they're going to have to watch Band of Brothers start to finish to get over it."

NGO representatives said they weren't as cooperative as they should have been because the minister was pushing for information instead of NATO. "When we were asked to be more cooperative, we reverted to our stereotypes. We yanked back that little bit of hope that the minister, NATO, and Civil Affairs had," said one.

"Standing in Someone Else's Shoes"

Participants discussed how difficult it was to play parts that were diametrically opposed to their real-world roles. "To be so out-of-character was really difficult," said an NGO representative. "In the real world, I'd know what to say when something got refuted." Another group member requested that the next simulation pair individuals with more compatible roles: "I would like to hear people's strong arguments when they're in their normal roles. I would like to hear the NGO viewpoint." However, several participants said it was useful to "stand in someone else's shoes." Joked a military officer: "I watched the other Captains reading the instructions and feeling dirty about the role they had to play as NGO workers. I know they're going to have to watch *Band of Brothers* start to finish to get over it."

PRTs: A Work in Progress

The group also discussed the actual track record of PRTs. While several participants thought PRTs were a good idea, they said their success was wildly variable and dependent upon the group's priorities, resources, and local leadership. Other impediments to success included a lack of consistency across teams, difficulties meeting local expectations, and changing scope. While PRTs can solve local problems, finding money and tools to develop the local infrastructure and economy, they can only tackle problems that are in line with government priorities. Another challenge is that the purpose of PRTs – long-term development – is at odds with their staffing. Said one participant: "You can't have something with a long-term mission that changes personnel every six months and scope with each new commander."

Creating a Political Language for Peace

To bring a real-life perspective to the group's training, workshop facilitators invited a guest speaker, Reverend Byron Bland, to discuss his work in Northern Ireland. Bland has helped a grassroots organization, Community Dialogue, explore the social and political dynamics of reconciliation.

Presenter:

Rev. Byron Bland
Associate Director
Stanford Center on International Conflict and Negotiation

How do you create a language for peace? And what does reconciliation look like in a society scarred by years of violence and deep cultural divides? These important questions have guided Reverend Byron Bland in his work as a practitioner who has sought to make the connection between theory and practice through his organization, the Stanford Center on Conflict and Negotiation; as the author of *Getting Beyond Cheap Talk*; and in his hands-on work in Northern Ireland.

What Reconciliation Means

In her seminal work *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt defines reconciliation as forgiveness for the past and a promise for the future. While most researchers have focused on forgiveness, Bland feels that the hope of a shared future is what allows warring parties to end strife and work towards reconciliation. This hope can be complicated by competing objectives: A party who feels he is sustaining significant losses needs to see cooperation from the other side to feel that reconciliation is politically and socially meaningful.

In Northern Ireland, local citizens didn't have much say in the political process, which was being steered by the British and Irish Governments. Community Dialogue sought to engage local citizens by asking three core questions: What do you want? Why do you want it? And given that others disagree, what can you live with?

Barriers to Cross-Cultural Understanding

According to Bland, there are three primary barriers to creating understanding between competing factions: naive realism, false polarization, and reactive devaluation. A naive realist believes that his view of the world captures the way it really is; anyone who doesn't share his views or refuses to change has evil motives. If an opposing party does something good, it manifests his strategic or tactical understanding of the situation; on the other hand, the naive realist's action reflects the inherent goodness of his character.

False polarization occurs when parties can't see the ambivalence of the other side's position and are blind to the common

There are four critical problems that have to be addressed to create meaningful reconciliation between warring parties:
• The problem of a shared future • The problem of trustworthiness
• The problem of loss • The problem of just entitlements
— Negotiation Expert Reverend Byron Bland

ground that they share. To counteract false polarization, each party should articulate the strongest arguments for his opponent's position to demonstrate that he understands the other side's needs and desires.

Reactive devaluation occurs when one party diminishes the value of another's offer. The recipient becomes suspicious, analyzing the offer to see if there is a trick involved and minimizes its worth. This makes the giver unhappy, because the concession involves real political cost. To prevent reactive devaluation, parties making concessions should explain why they are making an offer, why they are choosing this particular one, and why the timing is significant.

As groups leverage a common understanding to strengthen political relationships, they face four critical issues: the problem of a shared future, the problem of trustworthiness, the problem of loss, and the problem of just entitlements.

Building Trust

At the simplest level, each side's arguments about the future are cries for recognition: Is there a place for me in this new future? If they are sustaining losses, parties must find them bearable and believe that they will continue to have status and a role in the new order.

Creating trust is critical to building a shared future. Parties must believe that their interests are now intertwined and will be promoted jointly. One way to build trust is to specify open and closed arguments: which issues will be left open, and which ones must be resolved now. Weaker parties will typically seek to leave issues open to create future leverage. Another strategy is to agree to cooperate, even though each side has different reasons for doing so. Groups might agree about the final outcome, but disagree about the process, or vice versa, but use this commonality to move forward.

Validating Each Side's Losses

Creating peace necessarily creates loss. One or more parties will give up gains and will typically perceive losses as greater than the other side's. It's a mistake to try and force parties to perceive their losses as equal;

"No one asks the question: 'Is this a just peace?' Instead they ask themselves: 'Is this peace worth enduring?'"

— Reverend Byron Bland

the best approach is simply to get them to perceive the other side's losses as authentic, said Bland. In Northern Ireland, mediators asked each side to speak about the other's losses: When the Republicans articulated what the Unionists were giving up, the Unionists felt understood and validated.

Because each side is typically losing something, both parties may feel that the new peace is unjust. Each side will differ in his opinion of what a just peace constitutes; hence, creating common ground is futile. Instead, parties should work to lessen the impact of injustice on each side. No one asks the question: "Is this a just peace?" Instead they ask themselves: "Is this peace worth enduring?" In South Africa, Nelson Mandela was able to win multiple concessions from President Frederik Willem de Klerk (equal voting rights and political power for the ANC among them) and end apartheid because he painted a picture of a shared future for both Africans and Afrikaners.

During the question and answer period, a participant asked about the model's applicability to non-Western cultures. Bland conceded that forgiveness was a Western construct, but said that all societies provide a means to repair broken relationships. Another asked how the model would apply to a group like the Taliban, which provides some services to the local population but has an unbearable ideology. Bland said that demonstrating trustworthiness was critical and drew parallels to the Israeli-Palestinian situation where each group's posturing has hampered peace talks.

Towards a Safe Haven

For the event's final simulation, participants negotiated a crisis with no BATNA. Failure to mediate peace between two warring factions in the fictional country of Meni would mean thousands of internally displaced persons, who desperately needed vaccination, would perish in an impending smallpox epidemic.

Presenter/ Facilitator:

Jonathan Morgenstein
Program Officer
United States Institute of Peace

The event's final simulation offered a proving ground to practice new principles in the face of an escalating crisis. The setting: The fictional country of Meni, home to three different ethnic groups: the Lambilis, a Muslim group constituting 15% of the population; the Banas, Muslims representing 45% of the population; and the Owos, Christians comprising 40% of the population. The country has seen years of despotism and civil war, with fractured alliances between the different ethnic groups, as well as multiple coups. President Oboto, an Owo businessman, has escalated the crisis by selling state-owned farms, aiding new owners in evicting thousands of Bana farmers, and financing a military offensive against a rebel Bana group, the National Salvation Front (NSF). With fighting between the government and rebels growing, hundreds of thousands of Bana and Lambili internally displaced persons (IDPs) have been forced to flee into the mountains between Meni and its neighbor Bakara.

After growing international pressure, Meni's leader, President Oboto, and the NSF leader Bashir agree to a ceasefire, realizing it is in their best interests. President Oboto is afraid of overextending his forces, while Bashir wishes to protect the NSF's most valuable asset, the Maru emerald mine. A UN peacekeeping force is sent to Meni to monitor the cease-fire, establish disarmament centers, escort aid convoys, and create a secure environment for negotiating the peace settlement.

A Growing Humanitarian Crisis

Two NGOs have begun to work with the IDPs in this dangerous region: a global Christian NGO, Sanctuary International, and a local Muslim NGO, Zakat. However, the camps have quickly become a lightning rod: While 80% of camp members are Bana and Lambili women and children, President Oboto has charged that many are soldiers and thus must disarm. Meanwhile, Bashir has defended the right of the IDPs to bear small arms. President Oboto's capture of humanitarian convoys, led by Sanctuary International and their UN escorts, has just escalated the crisis. If the supplies, which include crucial vaccines, do not reach the camps within a week, a smallpox epidemic will surely erupt and claim the

"I got everything I wanted," said a workshop participant playing the role of President Oboto, "because the group was so fixated on the smallpox epidemic. I said that I would let the aid in if the NSF would disarm, and a minute later they were all beating on the NSF."

lives of tens of thousands. The UN's Special Representative to the Secretary General must secure daunting commitments from the warring factions: the release of the convoys and personnel; and agreements to honor the ceasefire, restart the disarmament process, and begin peace proceedings.

Workshop facilitators created three subgroups and assigned participants roles as the president, rebel leader, multi-ethnic peace activists, UN Special Representative to the Secretary General, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Representative, and two NGO leaders. Each group was to promote its own agenda, while the UN Special Representative sought to achieve consensus and the UN's objectives. Workshop facilitators urged groups to assess the negotiation for key principles they had learned during the sessions – conflict styles, positions and interests, BATNAs, third parties, and cultural differences – and implement new skills. Participants were encouraged to build trust with their counterparts and use creativity to find solutions.

Negotiating with Bullies

Groups were given three hours to complete the exercise. All of the participants playing the UN Special Representative chose to meet with some or all of the parties one-on-one to ascertain their interests and brainstorm a strategy. In the first group, the UN Special Representative was able to form an alliance with the NGOs and local activists, agreeing to focus on short-term objectives like the hostage release, disarmament, and the ceasefire. However, she ran into trouble when the president proved intractable and the UNHCR Representative antagonized others in the group, overstepping her mandate by offering solutions of her own and using inflammatory language that divided the group further.

In the second group, the president, who deliberately sat at the head of the table to establish his power, tied release of the convoy to disarmament. "I got everything I wanted," he said, "because the group was so fixated on the smallpox epidemic. I said that I would let the aid in if the NSF would disarm, and a minute later they were all beating on

Workshop participants network at the opening reception.

the NSF." The third group created a series of milestones to accomplish their objectives: redeploying 10% of the UN Force to the camp to provide security, releasing the detainees, providing convoy security, and creating an established military perimeter. The smallpox crisis helped compel this group's participants to agree on short-term objectives, and they decided to defer other issues until the next meeting.

Small Things Count

Workshop facilitator Jonathan Morgenstein brought up some issues he had observed as he watched the different groups negotiate. In one group, Bashir and Oboto were seated side by side, which caused a problem when the rebel leader got up and walked away. Warring parties should never be seated next to each other. In another, the president proved a stickler for language, insisting that the convoy representatives be referred to as detainees, not hostages, since they were guests of the government. Language can often prove to be a lightning rod in negotiations, said Morgenstein, so it's important to use terms that all members can agree to. In several groups, people tried to use the media to force others to make concessions; however, this ploy doesn't work if the leaders you're negotiating with don't care about international censure. And finally, many groups had side negotiations, a common and useful practice, but one that can lead to leaks.

As all of the groups witnessed, the mediator was ostensibly in charge, but could easily get sidelined by powerful personalities with competing demands. In addition, rogue operators were able to derail or delay even those agreements supported by most of the group's players. Successful negotiators will keep the talks on course and use multiple tactics to achieve their objectives.

Conclusion

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Working Effectively in Post-Conflict and Humanitarian Situations: Tools for Communication, Collaboration, and Negotiation was designed to help relief actors refine negotiation skills and practice using them in scenarios that mimicked conditions they might experience in the field. Participants learned about their personal conflict styles and negotiation principles before executing a series of increasingly complex exercises that involved players with competing agendas, escalating crises, and third parties serving as mediators. To drive home learning objectives, participants assumed roles they would never play in the field: A military commander became a rebel leader; a defense engineer, a despot; and an NGO representative, a US Army Civil Affairs liaison. This was uncomfortable for many participants, but forced them to think creatively to get their alter egos' objectives accomplished. Ideally, this type of challenging role play would also improve participants' ability to assess the positions and interests of their counterparts in the field.

During the multi-day event, participants used all five negotiation styles – competing, avoiding, accommodating, compromising, and collaborating – to help groups with opposing objectives focus on higher-level purposes and create successful outcomes. In the Odin exercise, participants realized that articulating positions helped them find common ground and create "win-win" agreements, while in the PRT exercise, they found that delineating cultural differences and information sharing objectives was instrumental in creating a model that would work for all participants. Finally, in the Meni simulation, participants used a wide array of strategies to execute a difficult scenario with no BATNA: holding preparatory meetings with a subset of participants, using short-term concessions to leverage longer-term agreements, tabling non-urgent issues, and isolating troublesome participants. With the lives of so many on the line, participants had to execute a successful negotiation. One participant played the role of a third party, helping warring factions agree on terms that would address their interests, while averting a humanitarian crisis.

Global Majority Executive Director Lejla Mavris (left) and President William Monning (center) talk to Miranda Ibishi, a Program Coordinator with the Kosovan Nansen Dialogue.

The workshop also helped participants build relationships and expand their understanding of the larger relief community. NGOs explained their organizations' missions to the military personnel and described how grant cycles work. Meanwhile, military personnel clarified common misperceptions about military authority. Although participants didn't describe their organizations in detail until the final day, all agreed that this was an incredibly useful process and should have happened on the first day to set the stage for the learning exercises.

While divergent purposes and organizational cultures still separate NGOs, government civilian agencies, and the armed forces – hence one participant's comment that "We're not on the same team" – practitioners from all organizations increasingly see the value of working together in the field. Whether they're sharing information with other actors to improve security or operational efficiency, teaming on strategies to help host governments avert or stabilize crises, or collaborating internally to improve effectiveness, practitioners can use negotiation techniques to ensure that they and their organizations are successful in the field. *Working Effectively* helped practitioners develop a toolkit to use in a wide array of circumstances to create successful outcomes and build careers as the next generation of relief leaders.

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